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A NEW SNAKE OF THE GENUS LAMPROPELTIS.

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AMONG a small collection of reptiles made at Miquihuana, Tamaulipas, Mexico, by Mr. Wilmot W. Brown, and presented to the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy by Col. John E. Thayer, was a very handsome King Snake which Dr. Barbour has kindly allowed me to describe. Owing to Dr. F. N. Blanchard's recent excellent revision of the genus¹ this has been an easy matter.

Lampropeltis thayeri, sp. nov.

Type, No. 19551, Museum of Comparative Zoölogy (collector's No. 1944), an adult male from Miquihuana, Tamaulipas, Mexico, collected by W. W. Brown. June 16, 1924.

Diagnosis.—Differs from *L. mexicana* in being completely ringed with broad bands of bright Venetian red, margined with narrow rings of black, 30 of such red rings as against 39 red blotches on *L. mexicana*. Dorsal scale-rows 25-23-19 as against 23-21-19; nine infralabials against ten, there being four instead of five under the last three supralabials. The higher number of caudals, 62 instead of 55, is a sexual difference to be expected as the types of *L. mexicana* are both females.

Description.—Ventrals, 194; caudals, 62; supralabials, 7; infralabials, 9, fifth largest, 4 under the last 3 supralabials; preocular single; postoculars, 2; temporals, 2 in the first row, 3 in the second, and 4 or 5 in the third; posterior chin-shields shorter than the anterior, and separated from each other by a small scale; loreal about twice as long as high; anal plate entire; scales smooth, with 2 apical pits in some cases only; dorsal scale-rows 25-23-19. Length of body, 690 mm. Length of tail, 50 mm. Tail is contained $14\frac{1}{2}$ times in total length. Eye as large as in *L. mexicana* but its diameter is not twice the height of the third supralabial, being but very slightly greater than the height of the third supralabial.

Coloration.—Head dirty white above, so heavily stippled with black as to produce a gray effect by nearly obscuring the ground color; a black blotch behind the eye; the frontal, supraoculars, and anterior third of the parietals bright Venetian red bordered by

¹ Blanchard, F. N. "A Revision of the King Snakes: Genus *Lampropeltis*." Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., no. 114, 1921.

black, lightly in front, and heavily behind on the parietals. The first of 24 bright Venetian-red body-rings commences three scale-rows behind the parietals. Each of these rings is narrowly bordered before and behind by black, these black rings occupying from one to two scale-rows in width. The first of these black rings is produced forward on the parietals in a point. The red rings are six scale-rows in width (*circa* 15 mm.) anteriorly decreasing in size to three scale-rows (*circa* 10 mm.) at midbody, but increasing again toward the tail. Six red rings on the tail make 30 in all. Counting the ground-color gray band on the head there are 31 gray bands in total length. Counting the traces of black rings on the head there are 62 such rings in all, the last enveloping the tail-tip which is wholly black. Below, the throat is yellowish followed by irregular black blotches on the ventrals which replace in an irregular fashion the gray bands of the dorsal surface. The black and red rings are more or less distinct and clearly defined on the ventral surface and tail.

Remarks.—Miquihuana lies some 125 miles, as the crow flies, northwest of San Luis Potosí, the type locality of *Lampropeltis mexicana* (Garman). I am informed that the avifauna of these two localities also differs considerably. The new species has been carefully compared with the types of *L. mexicana* which are preserved in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy.

Lampropeltis leonis (Günther).

I should like to take this opportunity of remarking that the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy has recently received four examples of this very rare snake (hitherto only known from the type, described in 1893) from Alvarez, San Luis Potosí, Mexico. They were collected by Mr. W. W. Brown and presented to the Museum by Dr. Barbour.

They agree in most respects with Günther's description but differ in having two apical pits on their smooth scales as anticipated by Blanchard (page 138). While the type had 200 ventrals and 50 caudals, the present series have a range of 189–196 ventrals and 54–58 caudals, no less than three of the four snakes having 58 caudals. There is an aberration in No. 19024 which has 3+4 temporals on the left side, *two* of the three anterior ones being in contact with the postoculars. In No. 19025 the temporals are 2+3 with *both* anterior in contact with the postoculars.

It is, however, in coloring that the chief differences occur. The type is said to have "body pale olive-color on the back, with 27 salmon-colored incompletely black-edged spots." In our specimens the spots are as follows:

19022.....	36 spots on the body and 9 on the tail
19023.....	39 " 10 "
19024.....	47 " 11 "
19025.....	35 " 10 "

None of these specimens has a black band along the middle of the lower part of the tail though it is indicated by a coalescing of black spots in No. 19024 which is the only adult specimen of the series. No. 19025 agrees with the type in having a few black blotches on its ventral surface, the others, particularly No. 19024, are very heavily blotched and marbled with black along the whole under surface.